

Agricultural Commission Meeting Minutes

November 9th, 2010

Town Hall

Members Present: Jaime Wagner, Ruth Hazzard, John Thibbits, Jeremy Barker-Plotkin, and Sally Fitz

Members Absent: Pat Wagner, Touria Eaton, and Wm Levine

Non Members Present: Kerry Strayer

Minutes: The October minutes were approved with changes

Subcommittee Reports:

Farmers Market: Jeremy reported that there was a concern with the farmers market, John Spanetti would like to get a campaign going to stop work on the Spring St. parking lot where the market is being held, he said the work has been very disruptive to the market. It was thought that a meeting should be held to discuss the effect of the improvements on the market, the farmers market subcommittee will contact Guilford Mooring about this.

There is a publicity group set up now for the Winter Farmers Market, there is now over 25 vendors with over 90 products. There is going to be a "Stone Soup" publicity event the Saturday before the market to help promote it, they are looking to solicit local businesses to help sponsor events, and UMASS Extension is set to donate \$500.00 to be a sponsor. There have been 3 applicants interested in the market manager position, interviews will begin this week. The market is hoping to get High school and Middle school volunteers, Sally mentioned that the High School has a community service club, Sally is going to send information to the PGO and the common school as well as the high school and middle school.

Education: Sally reported that she did volunteer at the middle school cleanup day, while there was a small turnout they accomplished a lot.

Touria and Pat went to the Hawthorne property site visit, Touria called Sally, she asked that the school let us know what it would like to do, the piece of land is about 300 sq. feet, it is a workable piece of land. If the principal sent us some of this information about what he would like to see, we could take a position on this. Sally is going to act as the contact between the principals and the AgComm.

Kerry Strayer a neighbor of the Hawthorne Property was at this meeting, he would like to see the town use this property for Ag, and he would like our support with this, he is not interested in seeing the town put recreational fields here. Sally wonders why more fields are needed when others are so close by and hardly used, Ruth would like to see some sort of soil testing done on the property. There is going to be an open meeting 12/9 the AgComm should encourage reps from the town and schools to be present so everyone can understand the values of Ag uses. In addition to the soil values it would be beneficial to also have some historical information about the past Ag use too.

There was a motion to have the AgComm refer this matter to the Preservation committee, and ask that there be soil samples taken and some historical data gathered, this motion was approved 5-0.

CFCA: The newsletter is going to print, there is going to be some minor changes, and is being mailed as soon as printed.

Preservation and Use: Wm and Jeremy met with David Ziomek to talk about the conservation commission developing general policies about how Conservation land is used for farming

Warrant Articles: the article regarding poultry was referred back to the planning board
The farmstand article was approved.

The preference for Ag products is coming up at the November 10, 2011 Town Meeting; Ruth is set to talk at this. Sally spoke with the Select Board regarding this, and they support our position.

Approved at the March 8, 2011 Agricultural Commission meeting.

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Implementation of the Right to Farm Bylaw – this has not been handed out to new home buyers in town, like it is supposed to be. Ruth will be speaking with the Select Board about the winter farmers market and she is going to mention this as well.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM

Respectfully submitted

Jaime Wagner